
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE
TO EXAMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF TRANSFERRING THE PLANT
QUARANTINE BRANCH FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

1 WHEREAS, Honolulu Harbor and Honolulu International Airport
2 are the major gateways to Hawaii; and
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4 WHEREAS, the vast majority of passengers, cargo, and mail
5 entering or leaving the State do so through Honolulu Harbor and
6 Honolulu International Airport; and
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8 WHEREAS, the well-being of Honolulu Harbor and Honolulu
9 International Airport is essential to the economic health,
10 sustainability, and environmental protection of the State; and
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12 WHEREAS, initiatives to modernize the Honolulu Harbor and
13 Honolulu International Airport have been underfunded and have
14 not been conducted with the urgency necessary to ensure Hawaii's
15 economic health and sustainability; and
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17 WHEREAS, environmental concerns incurring significant cost
18 overruns have delayed the modernization of Honolulu Harbor and
19 Honolulu International Airport; and
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21 WHEREAS, the Plant Quarantine Branch of the Department of
22 Agriculture is tasked with preventing the introduction and
23 spread of harmful pests and diseases into the State, as well as
24 certifying plants for export out of the State; and
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26 WHEREAS, there are increased concerns regarding the
27 Department of Agriculture's inability to hire inspectors in a
28 timely manner; and



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2 WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture has failed to submit
3 reports to the Legislature on the status of the Biosecurity
4 Program pursuant to sections 150A-56 and 150A-57, Hawaii Revised
5 Statutes; and

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7 WHEREAS, members of the agricultural and environmental
8 sectors, as well as the community at large, have expressed
9 concern regarding the Department of Agriculture's lack of
10 transparency and progress in implementing the Biosecurity
11 Program; and

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13 WHEREAS, inspection at ports of entry is considered the
14 most effective means of preventing unwanted plants and animals
15 from entering the State; and

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17 WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation is mandated by
18 the Federal Aviation Administration to reduce or eliminate the
19 introduction of invasive species at state airports; and

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21 WHEREAS, the transfer of the Plant Quarantine Branch from
22 the Department of Agriculture to the Department of
23 Transportation may facilitate the State's efforts in preventing
24 the establishment of invasive species in Hawaii; now, therefore,

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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
28 Session of 2015, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
29 Agriculture is requested to convene a task force to examine the
30 feasibility of transferring the Plant Quarantine Branch from the
31 Department of Agriculture to the Department of Transportation;
32 and

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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following are requested to
35 serve as members of the task force:

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37 (1) The Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture or the
38 Chairperson's designee, who is requested to serve as
39 Chairperson of the task force;

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41 (2) One member appointed by the Governor;



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- (3) One member appointed by the President of the Senate;
- (4) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- (5) The Director of Transportation or the Director's designee; and
- (6) The Chief of the Plant Quarantine Branch of the Department of Agriculture or the Chief's designee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Governor and Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Director of Transportation, Chief of the Plant Quarantine Branch of the Department of Agriculture, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives.

OFFERED BY:

